

Welcome Home

A Guide to Living in The Villages at Belvoir

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Belvoir Eagle

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On the cover:

Sgt. John Alley is greeted by his wife Kara and daughter Emma, 7, on the steps of their Herryford Village home. (Photo by Marny Malin)

'Welcome home' has many meanings

By Command Sgt. Maj.
Tracey E. Anbiya

"Welcome home." For military families, those words carry many meanings. For the deployed Soldier, "welcome home" is the sweet reward for a job well done. For the military spouse, "welcome home" may be the greeting offered warmly by parents and family when returning home for a visit. For military children, "welcome home" may signify the completion of a parent's overseas tour, and their return to the familiar, "normal" life in the States.

I'd like to suggest another meaning. For Fort Belvoir families, "welcome home" should be the feeling they have every time they walk through the door of their Fort Belvoir home. Instead of being just one more place to live over the course of a military career, Fort Belvoir should be a true home to our residents.

Through our partnership with Clark Pinnacle, we're making that happen.

Gone are the days when the Army shuffled families in and out of government-owned and operated quarters, with little or no maintenance per-



Command Sgt. Maj.
Tracey E. Anbiya

formed between occupants.

Gone are the days of drab row houses, scratched and marred wood floors, and kitchens dating back to the 1970s.

And, hopefully, gone are the days when a military family moved into a Fort Belvoir home, took a look at the condition of the house, and immediately began marking off days on the calendar until their next change of station.

Clark Pinnacle assumed management responsibility for all homes on Fort Belvoir in December 2003, and embarked upon an eight-year project to

demolish and replace 1,630 homes and renovate 170 historically significant ones. To date, Clark Pinnacle has completed 555 new homes and 25 historic renovations — almost a third of the way through the 1,800 new homes and renovations in the project.

But bricks and mortar do not make a house a home. Quality management of Fort Belvoir neighborhoods, both old and new, is key to making military families feel welcome. From establishing and operating a first-class welcome center in the new Town Center on 12th Street to maintaining neighborhood tot lots and community centers, Clark Pinnacle has taken steps to imbue our neighborhoods with a sense of community.

Our residential villages are also part of the greater Fort Belvoir community. I like to think of Fort Belvoir as a small town, and a look around our installation reinforces that thinking. Our fire department visits our villages, going door-to-door to offer our residents friendly tips on fire safety — where else but in a small town can you get to know your local firefighters by name? Our military and Department of the Army civilian police frequent our

Instead of being just one more place to live over the course of a military career, Fort Belvoir should be a true home to our residents.

neighborhoods in vehicle and bike patrols, providing a watchful presence and keeping our families safe. Our Youth Services and other Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs far exceed anything offered in civilian communities.

As military families travel from duty station to duty station, they live in many different houses. Some they remember fondly as places they called home, others were simply dwellings where they lived for a short time.

The goal of the Fort Belvoir command group is that our residents remember our neighborhoods as places where the bricks and mortar are backed up by caring management and a great community. On behalf the command group and the entire Fort Belvoir team, I'm proud to say to our residents: "Welcome home."

Letter to the Editor

To the service members of Fort Belvoir,

You need to know how much we admire your courage in defending our freedoms. We recognize how much you and your families sacrifice for our country.

That is why we at Clark Pinnacle are deeply honored to have the privilege of delivering the new homes and communities and exceptional services that you and your families deserve. While you are protecting our way of life, we are dedicated to providing a better quality of life for your families.

Our architect, Torti Gallas and Partners, has helped us create award-winning villages on-post, villages that have won national awards for their design and smart growth. This year, the Villages at Belvoir received a coveted Charter Award from the Congress for New Urbanism, and the "Best Suburban Smart Growth Community" gold medal award from the National Associ-

ation of Home Builders. The Villages at Belvoir is the only privatized military housing project to have received these awards, a testimony to our mission of providing you with the same quality of living in housing as the civilians you defend.

By 2011, Fort Belvoir will be home to 2,070 new and renovated homes and five new community centers. We are making progress. Our first two new villages were delivered two months ahead of schedule. We continue to deliver an average of 35 new homes per month. We are opening the second new 4,200-square-foot neighborhood center. And along 12th Street leading to the new Welcome Center, we have built the first mixed-use residential/retail buildings in the history of the Army's Residential Communities Initiative. The stores will begin opening their doors for business this summer.

We know how eager many families are to receive a new home. We also

know your family's well-being depends not just on your home, but on your community and the services you receive.

Our management team strives with great care to respond to your needs, providing you with such services as on-site community managers, grass cutting, leaf removal and full-service maintenance.

We care about the work you are doing on our behalf. We care about you.

On behalf of Clark Pinnacle, we are proud to welcome you home.

Sincerely,

Casey Nolan
Project Director
Clark Realty Capital

Dale Andrews
Investment Manager
Pinnacle, An American
Management Services Company



Photo by Marny Malin

Vernondale Village is home to noncommissioned officers and was the second new Fort Belvoir village completed.

CDMP provides guidelines

By Jennifer Brennan

Many people collaborated to bring forth a Community Development Management Plan that would reflect the Army's, Fort Belvoir's and private developer's vision for privatized housing.

The process began September 2002, when Clark Pinnacle Family Communities, LLC, was selected as the Army's partner to write the plan, said

Cheri Thompson, Residential Communities Liaison Office project support specialist.

The seven-volume comprehensive proprietary plan contains the vision of Fort Belvoir's housing for the span of 50 years from the time the project began in December 2003 to its completion.

The plan was and still remains to

See CDMP, Page C19

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Residents Respond

What do you think of privatized housing on Fort Belvoir?

Harvey family

Keaundra Harvey, 14; Vincent; Vincent II, 8; Sabrina

"Everything is better. The neighborhood is better, the house has plenty of storage space. The streets are wider and they have plenty of lighting. We would highly recommend staying on post to everyone. The maintenance people are super, there is a high turn around for any issue. They attend to problems before we notice them or they are told. The rooms are spacious and it is great having a pantry. The laundry has a separate room and that is fantastic. Overall the quality is impressive."



Beneux family

Spc. Josh Beneux; Leanne; Savannah, 4; Madison, 5

"I like the community, it is a really good sized house. Having a garage is a definite bonus. The children have plenty of room to play. They can use the green space to play soccer and baseball. The other day we held a game using shoes for the bases. Privacy for the most part is good. Neighbors are pleasant. The house itself is excellent. The fact that it is military housing is fantastic, comparing it to other housing on bases in the past. Work commute is a hop, skip and a jump. There is no rank based type of discrimination in the awarding of housing, that is a real positive."



Chase family

Erin Chase, 8; Tucker, 6; Sam, 8; Ann

"It's wonderful. We have five children so in this area it's extremely expensive. We feel blessed to be living on post. This is probably the first time we have been able to give three of our children their own rooms. We have been able to keep the master bedroom. The kitchen is huge, we can all fit in the kitchen comfortably. I am always in the kitchen and the appliances are wonderful. I home school so the space is a definite plus. We are either in the kitchen or dining area, cooking, eating, learning or playing."



Kizzee family

Myles Kizzee, 4; Spc. Cedric Kizzee; Leichala; Kaelyn, 6

"It's nice, more than I expected. I really don't have any complaints. This is much better than any other place I have been. It's very comparable to any civilian neighborhood. Your expectations really aren't that high and we were pleasantly surprised."



The road to privatization

By Jennifer Albert

If you took a window tour of the housing on any of the 47 Army installations being phased into the Army's Residential Communities Initiative, you would see the complexion of military housing changing.

No longer are there antiquated, yet "remodeled" World War II homes with green apple shag carpet. Instead, standing in their place are 21st century homes with modern appliances and amenities, comparable to the homes for sale in nearby communities.

This wave of change has left many scratching their heads wondering how the Army can afford to transform its forces, fight the Global War on Terrorism and still be able to provide Soldiers and their families with world-class, quality homes.

The answer is — privatized housing.

Which logically begs the questions, "What is RCI and how did this all begin?"

The Army RCI program is a component of the Military Housing Privatization Initiative that was signed into legislation in 1996 as part of the Defense Authorization Act. This legislation provided a means for the military to improve the quality of life for service members by improving the condition of their housing and was a response to an early 1990s finding that 60 percent of DoD owned housing was inadequate.

The privatization process allows the Army to leverage appropriated housing funds and assets to attract private-sector capital and expertise, to manage, maintain and build housing.

Through RCI, the Army could provide the necessary military construction processes would allow, to which also the costs would have been extraordinary and the timeframe long.

"If this initiative would have been attempted through the normal appropriations process, it would have taken at least 25 to 30 years," said Ivan Bolden, the Army's Residential Communities Initiative program manager. "Although many installations were in dire need of new housing, the initiative would have competed against other Army priorities."

In addition, RCI allowed for the minimum standards for housing to be increased, all the while being more energy efficient and offering Soldiers more amenities, according to Bolden.

Building homes is just one facet of the Army's privatization process.

In addition to providing Soldiers and their families with new residential homes and communities, the Army is also restoring and modernizing existing homes that do not require demolition or cannot be demolished due to their historical significance.

For example, 170 of Fort Belvoir's 2,070 homes are being



Workers load wood onto a crane in Cedar Grove Village.

Photos by Marry Malin

renovated instead of demolished because they are historically sensitive.

RCI and Fort Belvoir

The Army's RCI program began with four pilot projects and then an additional 20 projects were added in 2001. Fort Belvoir was included in those additions.

Fort Belvoir partnered with Clark Pinnacle Family Communities, LLC, under a 50-year contract to renovate, upgrade and replace existing housing on the installation, which also includes the ongoing property management and maintenance.

The planning for Belvoir's RCI housing followed traditional community land planning concepts that mirrored what is found off post, according to



All new homes on Fort Belvoir include garages.

Bolden.

The design complemented the installation's historic architecture and allowed for spacious interior layout, with mod-

ern energy-saving appliances, organized around village

See ROAD, Page C22

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Cash flow vital to project's success

By Julia LeDoux

New residential neighborhoods are springing up all over Fort Belvoir, the result of a \$700 million public-private partnership between the Department of the Army and Clark Pinnacle Communities LLC.

"Keep in mind that this total includes not only the construction hard costs, but development soft costs, property management and maintenance, and debt service," said Casey Nolan, project director for Clark Pinnacle.

All the work is being financed

through a bond, net operating income or cash flow generated during the construction period, interest earnings and an equity contribution from Clark Pinnacle, explained Nolan.

"This cash flow is directly correlated to the BAH [Basic Allowance for Housing]," he explained. "Soldiers' BAH is rent which is used to pay the operating expenses and debt that enables the construction of homes to happen."

The original loan was approximately \$430 million of debt from Societe General, Nolan continued. Clark Capital Markets Group arranged to refinance the original debt early last year in order

to take advantage of market conditions. The new bonds were issued in three classes rated AAA, AA3 and A3 by Moody's Investor Service.

"This refinancing infused the project with additional capital through a lower interest rate and other financial metrics," Nolan said. "At the time of the refinancing, the Belvoir debt had the lowest interest rate and highest bond rating of any military housing project."

Nolan said the debt refinancing enables the project to do more with the capital at hand.

"In other words, we can spend more money building new homes versus

paying debt," he said, adding the new bond issuance is held by Lehman Brothers.

The initial development plan spans eight years and includes the demolition and replacement of approximately 1,630 homes and the renovation of 170 historically significant residences on the installation. When complete, Clark Pinnacle will manage a total of more than 2,000 homes on Fort Belvoir for the Army over the next 50 years.

"There is \$0 of government equity in the project," he stressed. "The primary source of capital is the bond, or loan on the project."

Soldier's BAH needed for Belvoir's privatized housing

By Julia LeDoux

Basic Allowance for Housing is intended to provide service members on active duty with equitable housing compensation based on housing costs in local civilian markets.

It can help service members cover the cost of renting an apartment, townhouse, or house off post, or it can be applied toward a mortgage. The BAH drawn by service members living in the installation's privatized residential villages is funneled to private developer Clark Pinnacle, which manages housing on the installation under the name The Villages at Belvoir.

Staffers with the Defense Military Pay Office on Fort Belvoir caution that a service member's BAH may not completely cover his off-post housing costs, no matter if the service member is renting or buying a home.

BAH is based upon geographic duty location, pay grade and dependency status, explained Walter Graves, a military pay technician with the DMPO. Service members who reside in the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area, which includes Fort Belvoir, receive a higher BAH than those who reside, for example, near Fort Rucker, Ala.

According to the 2006 BAH chart released by the Department of Defense, an E-5 with dependents assigned to Fort Rucker, Ala., will draw a monthly BAH of \$654. An E-5 with dependents who is assigned to Fort Belvoir receives a monthly BAH of \$1,704. An O-4 with dependents assigned to Fort Rucker receives \$1,092 in BAH while an O-4 with dependents assigned to Fort Belvoir receives \$2,470.

"BAH is based on location, duty assignment, rank and dependency, or on any combination of those or all of the above," Graves stressed.

Service members living on- or off-post see the BAH in their paychecks,



Photo by Marry Mallin

These Lewis Village homes cost approximately \$250,000 each to build.

said Graves. However, the BAH for service members who live on-post is payable in full to The Villages, which uses the money to cover the costs of managing, maintaining and constructing new housing and amenities on the installation.

Service members must turn over the BAH in full to The Villages because that is part of the agreement that was worked out between the Department of the Army and the company when housing became privatized.

The agreement also stipulates that service members of different grades pay different amounts for the same house. For example, if a sergeant first

class lives in a house identical to that occupied by a sergeant, each would pay their full BAH amount as rent.

Ivan Bolden, the Army's Residential Communities Initiative program manager for policy, explained that Soldiers who live on-post commonly pay their rent in an allotment. Under the allotment, BAH is automatically transferred to The Villages at Belvoir at the end of every month.

"The local Defense Military Pay Office does not start, stop or change the housing allotment," explained Graves. "It is only stopped, started and changed through Clark Pinnacle."

Soldiers can also opt to use an electronic funds transfer or pay the rent

in person each month.

BAH generally covers the cost of water, sewer, trash, lawn care, gas and electricity for Soldiers who live on post, he said.

While a plan is in the works to bill on-post residents for excessive utility use, those who use energy wisely should see no out-of-pocket expense. (See related story, Page C19.)

Bolden added that privatization does not impact the amount of BAH a Soldier receives.

Prior to the housing becoming privatized on Fort Belvoir in December of 2003, a Soldier's BAH was forfeited to the federal government if he chose to live on post.

System designed for prompt response to maintenance issues

By Melina Rodriguez

Ruth Belk carries an air conditioning manifold, a channel lock wrench and a screwdriver in her truck at all times because she always tries to be prepared when she is working on maintenance problems at The Villages at Belvoir.

"You try to have everything with you the first time you go out to a house," said Belk, a maintenance technician. "You try to make [the residents] happy."

Belk's job is to complete the final step in the maintenance process, which is going to the home, determining the problem and then fixing that problem, hopefully in one trip.

The first step in the process requires the resident to call their community manager and report the problem.

"During the day there is a manager that [residents] can speak with directly," said Mary Bronwyn, community director, Fort Belvoir Residential Communities. "After hours there is an answering service available 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

If a resident calls with an emergency when the office is closed, an answering service will pick up, Bronwyn said.

All maintenance problems are placed into classifications upon receipt.

Emergency problems include natural gas leaks, electrical hazards and a broken front door lock, said Eddie Hudspeth, maintenance director at Fort Belvoir.

Technicians will respond to these types of problems within an hour, no matter the time of day.

The next classification is urgent, which includes an inoperable oven, refrigerator or toilet, said Hudspeth. These requests will be responded to within four hours during normal business hours and within eight hours during evenings and weekends.

Then there is routine maintenance, which includes a dripping faucet, a broken tile or a loose baseboard. These problems are responded to within 72 hours during business hours.

"Residents can call a number and put in a work request," said Hudspeth. "The request hits our software system and then a supervisor or manager assigns the problem to a technician."

There is a full-time maintenance staff consisting of four crews assigned to the all of the villages at Fort Belvoir. Each crew has approximately eight technicians and groundskeepers and one supervisor.

Contract workers are used for problems that cannot be solved by the maintenance crews. "We try to do as much in house as possible," Hudspeth said. "But for other problems we use contracted vendors that are pre-approved through the procurement process. We solicit additional contractors as needed correct those items that we can't get to ... for example, during Memorial Day weekend, the first hot days of the summer, we had to use contractors to fix air conditioning units at the houses that we couldn't get to."

Contracted employees are always escorted on base by a Clark Pinnacle employee.

Residents are also provided with comment cards or can complete an online survey on the service that they received.

The Residential Communities Liaison Office, which oversees the housing contract and FBRC, monitors maintenance performance based on feedback received from those two sources.

Residents can contact Bronwyn if they are not satisfied with the service they receive.

And while RCLO is not at the forefront of housing issues, Vicki Davis, housing management specialist, works as a go-between for Soldiers and FBRC.

"I am right here in the midst of all the chaos," she said. "That is the primary way I monitor FBRC."

After going through the first two channels, issues can be brought to Davis who often times, she said, informs the garrison commander of the problem.



Photo by Marny Malin

Ruth Belk, Clark Pinnacle maintenance technician, works on replacing a faucet in a River Village home.

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Maintenance issues? Call your community manager:

Tric Zyzyk: River, Herryford & Vernondale villages (703) 781-7280

Rebecca Reiter: Belvoir, Rossell, Jadwin, Fairfax, Gerber & Lewis
villages (703) 781-4833

Joi Gatling: Dogue Creek, Colyer & Park villages (703) 781-0596

Tonja Faggins: Woodlawn Village (703) 781-0566

Other contacts:

Mary Bronwyn (703) 454-9723

Vicki Davis (703) 805-5368



Renovations keep touch of history

By Jennifer Albert

Belvoir's historic district

Fort Belvoir has long been touted as being a "unique" installation and well deserving of its name's meaning, 'Beautiful to See.' It carries a complex mission and is home to more than 100 tenant organizations, however, its reverence, in part, comes from the character and charm of the buildings and landmarks that make up the historic district.

And that "uniqueness" resonated with Clark Pinnacle Family Communities, LLC, when they were selected in 2002 to improve the quality of housing for the service members assigned to live on the installation as part of the Army's RCI program.

"When the project was awarded and began in December 2003 the Belvoir portfolio consisted of 2,070 homes, of which, 170 homes were identified as historically significant," said Casey Nolan, development executive for Clark Pinnacle Family Communities, LLC.

That meant Clark Pinnacle was charged with bringing those 170 homes into the 21st century without comprising their original integrity.

"These [170 homes] consist of 61 homes in Belvoir Village, 76 homes in Gerber Village, 25 town homes in Jadwin Village, six homes on 21st Street (also Jadwin Village) and two homes in Park Village; Rossell Village is also part of the historic district, however all existing homes will be demolished to make way for new homes after historic documentation is completed," added Nolan. "A legal agreement was reached between Fort Belvoir and the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office on what historic homes would be retained and what the general scope of renovations may include."

Fort Belvoir's historic heritage extends beyond housing as well at its gates, as it is surrounded by numerous historic sites such as Mount Vernon, Gunston Hall and Woodlawn Plantation.

Several administrative buildings, housing neighborhoods and landmarks considered worthy of their preservation because of their architectural style, and uses and origins, nominated and certified by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in 1996.

According to Fort Belvoir Historian, Gustav Person, the original request for National Landmark status was submitted by the architectural firm of Maar & Associates in 1992 and was later amended by Harnsberger & Associates in 1995-96.

"All the buildings in the Historic District were constructed during the period 1926-35 and encompassed the headquarters and academic buildings for the engineer school, two large barracks complexes that housed the engineer regiments on post and both officers' and non-commissioned officers' housing," said Person. "These buildings were built after the Army spent at least \$10 million to demolish most of the World War I buildings on the installation."

The Officers and NCO Clubs, a station hospital and a permanent elementary school were also constructed, added Person.

The homes encompassed in the historic district come from Gerber, Belvoir, Jadwin Loop, Park and Rossell Villages. These homes were built in the 1930's and 1940's designed in a colonial revival style to establish links with the colonial past of Virginia, said Person.

As the RCI program is being implemented at Fort Belvoir, the intent is to utilize the installation's history by retaining the homes in the historic district and then modeling the new homes after the old to contribute to the original colonial revival character of the early development.

RCI renovations

According to Nolan, the original scope of the renovation



Photos by Marry Malin

Appliances from housing on Rossell Loop await recycling.

tions was negotiated with the Army and outlined in the Community Development and Management Plan and determined these units at minimum would require interior rehabilitation, such as repair and upgrading of electrical and plumbing systems and kitchens and bathrooms, and added closets.

Clark Pinnacle and its architects held resident focus groups to understand the priorities of the residents of the homes in these villages, added Nolan, and data was compiled ranking the existing residents concerns.

"Feedback included such items as poor air conditioning, not enough closet space, excessive electrical work orders, old kitchens, no ceiling fans, etc.," said Nolan. "Our team absorbed the feedback and developed a renovation plan that would address the most prevalent complaints and help improve the quality of life for the renovated homes as best possible."

Other exterior rehabilitation work will include maintenance on painted surfaces, roofs, masonry and windows, with possible replacement of some windows and the landscaping will be maintained and upgraded, consistent with the historic landscape of the Villages.

All existing original details will be retained or replaced in kind if in deteriorated condition, and an effort will be made to restore important details that have been lost over the years, added Nolan.

Some houses will be enlarged with rehabilitation work such as the placement of additions, infill housing and garages, according to Nolan. All of the renovations are continually reviewed to be sure the character of each village has not been adversely affected by the change. Clark Pinnacle has retained RKtects, a professional historic architecture firm, to complete all historic design work and advise the partnership on SHPO coordination issues. In addition all designs are coordinated through the Fort Belvoir Cultural Resources Manager with the Department of Public Works to mitigate adverse impacts to the historic district.

"The new units will also be sympathetic of the materials and style of those in the historic corridor," said Nolan. "It is not to imitate them, rather so a distinction between the new and historic units may be made."

Current renovations are underway in Belvoir Village. The scope includes a new gas



Historic homes on Fort Belvoir will be refurbished with new appliances and cabinetry for incoming Soldiers and their families.

fired HVAC split system, new electrical wiring and technology ports, new kitchens, renovated master bathrooms, expanded master bedroom closet, refinished wood flooring, bedroom ceiling fans and a clean coat of paint.

Similar upgrades are planned for the historic renovations that will occur in Park, Jadwin Loop and Gerber Villages in the upcoming years.

Initiative builds more than homes

New neighborhoods inspire sense of community

By Jennifer Small

It's easy to build homes on a strip of land, but when Clark Pinnacle signed on as the Residential Communities Initiative developer on Fort Belvoir, they wanted to do more than that — they wanted to build communities for Soldiers and their families.

"When we looked at the Army housing, we said, 'Okay, what's missing?'" said Ivan Bolden, the Army's Residential Communities Initiative program manager. "What's missing is nice playgrounds; what's missing is tot lots; what's missing is jogging trails; what's missing is a sense of community. So instead of just building houses on a strip of land, we decided to build it like a civilian community."

If you drive in Vernondale or Lewis villages, you will not only see new homes, but also playgrounds, tot lots and common areas.

"The RCI process has allowed for greater neighborhood amenities, such as modern and conveniently located playgrounds and 'tot lots,'" said Bolden. "You can drive through the new neighborhoods almost anytime and see kids playing."

The goal of the RCI program was to give Soldiers the same lifestyle on military installations as they would



Photo by Marny Malin

New housing has been designed to be child friendly with wide sidewalks, large streets and large enough green areas for organized sports.

have in civilian communities.

On Fort Belvoir, new neighborhoods have been built with views of the golf course, community centers and a soon-to-

be-opened town center.

"Inherent in a community is a tot lot, jogging trails, playground equipment, and we wanted to provide that for

families, so that's what we did," Bolden said.

For the families living in the villages, the common areas offer a chance to meet

and get to know neighbors

"You meet people that

See INITIATIVE, Page C21

Tools help residents stay informed

By Melina Rodriguez

Americans are bombarded with information daily, and new information technology and services seem to spring up constantly. But when the information impacts daily life, people tend to notice.

To communicate with Fort Belvoir residents, the garrison and Fort Belvoir Residential Communities have adopted a multimedia approach.

"We have quarterly newsletters, we keep the Web page up to date and we have all kinds of intermittent communication," said Dale Andrews, Clark Pin-

nacle investment manager. "There are meetings with the mayors and on-site managers, town hall meetings and there is a welcome center for all of the neighborhoods."

The Welcome Center is available to residents with questions or concerns and new residents can take tours of the neighborhoods before moving to Fort Belvoir, said Kim Lear, marketing director for The Villages at Belvoir.

Lear also contributes to the Web site, www.belvoirfamilyhousing.com, and the

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A lesson learned

Renter's insurance proves beneficial

By Jennifer Brennan

Sgt. Ryan Tannon can't stress enough the importance of having renter's insurance.

A fire at his George Washington Village home in March 2005 engulfed most of his family's personal and cherished

belongings. Fortunately, the family safely evacuated.

Now Tannon, his wife, Josie, and two daughters live in Herryford Village but the memory of the fire still remains in their home. A smoke-damaged brown micro fiber couch sits in their living room, a salvaged item from the fire.

As Tannon sat on the couch, he

offered some advice: "You need to get your own renter's insurance."

Luckily, service members who move into Fort Belvoir's residential communities have private renter's insurance coverage for property damage and their personal items.

When Army housing transitioned to privatized housing Dec. 1, 2003, the Army required Fort Belvoir Residential Communities, LLC, to provide a basic renter's insurance to all residents. The insurance is covered by a percentage of the Basic Allowance for Housing FBRC receives each month for rent, according to Tric Zyzyk, Vernondale Village community manager.

FBRC provides the insurance coverage through Assurant Group at no additional cost to the residents. Each residence is provided with a renter's insurance policy of \$5,000 in personal property and \$25,000 in liability coverage, according to Zyzyk.

"It's the security of knowing if you ever need it — it's at no cost to you," Zyzyk said. "It's a security blanket that you don't realize is there."

When the residents move in, Assurant Group sends them information and options for additional coverage. The residents cannot cancel the insurance policies because they come with the homes. However, the residents can opt for additional options or other insurance providers, according to Zyzyk.

"Your personal insurance takes

precedence over the one we provide," Zyzyk said.

Assurant Group covers 16 perils: fire/lightening, windstorm or hail, explosions, riots, aircrafts, vehicles, smoke damage, vandalism, theft, falling objects; weight of ice, snow sleet; accidental discharge of water and steam; sudden or accidental tearing apart, cracking, burning or bulging; freezing, power outages and volcanic eruptions, according to the Assurant Group policy.

If residents need to file claims, they should contact the insurance company to report the losses. Residents can file claims with the Assurant Group by calling the company's customer service center at (800) 852-2244, ext. 35752, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

If residents need further assistance, they should call their community manager, Zyzyk said.

Vandalism, power outages and fires are all perils that left Fort Belvoir residents filing insurance claims, according to Zyzyk.

For the Tannons, the \$5,000 coverage for personal losses was not enough.

"It doesn't begin to scrape the surface of what you need," Tannon said.

The money did cover the cost of buying beds for the children, a dresser for his daughter and clothes for the family. Yet, Tannon can't imagine how costly the losses would have been without the

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See LESSON, Page C15



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Extreme Makeover

Fort Belvoir Style

Story by Julia LeDoux
Photos by Marny Malin

It's July and Fairfax Village residents CWO2 Kenley Kirkland, his wife Diana and their 14-month old daughter Amaia are in the process of moving into their newly constructed 3-bedroom, 2 1/2-bath home in Lewis Village.

"I'm loving it," Kenley said of his new home. "I love the garage."

"The whole floor plan is very open," added Diana.

Movers quickly off-loaded the Kirkland's furniture and other household items as

the couple, who have been married since 2004, shifted between their living room and kitchen.

"My Dad was in the military, so I'm used to moving," Diana said as she unloaded a box in her kitchen. "They did a great job labeling everything."

Homes in Lewis Village range in size from 2,218 to 2,785 gross square feet and feature fenced backyards and a detached two-car garage with storage space.

Continued on Page C12





The Kirkland family moved from Fairfax Village into this Lewis Village home this month. The time between the demolition of the first old home in a village to the time the first new home is complete is typically 18 to 24 months.

Extreme Makeover

Fort Belvoir Style

Continued from Page C11

"I'm loving the size," she added. When complete, the community will boast 274 homes, a neighborhood center with a greet room and management and maintenance offices.

The Kirkland's learned in April that they would move into their new home in July. They received the keys to their new house about 2 1/2 weeks before the moving company came to pack up their belongings for the short ride from Fairfax to Lewis.

"We had an advantage," acknowledged Kenley, a 12 1/2 year Army veteran who is currently a pilot with 12th Aviation Battalion. "We brought items such as pictures over and got them on the wall before the movers came."

Casey Nolan, project director for Fort Belvoir Residential Communities LLC, said residents are normally notified eight to 12 weeks in advance of their moving date. FBRC also holds a town hall style meeting with residents of villages such as Fairfax that are slated for demolition at which it communicates schedule and moving logistics information. When the initial residents of Lewis Village were notified that they would be moving, no homes were complete for them to look at, Nolan said.

"However, since the architecture and floor plans are similar for all the new homes, families can drive through the existing new villages (Herryford, Vernondale and now Lewis) to get a feel for the neighborhood design," he said.



According to FBRC Investment Manager Dale Andrews, all of the relocation moves for families in the path of demolition have been project paid moves, meaning that FBRC pays 100 percent of the packing and moving for all of the items in the home. The paid move covers the cost of a move within Belvoir or if the resident chooses to move off the installation instead of moving into a new home. Residents can also choose to move items themselves, but the

moving company is contracted to do the full move and insurance is provided.

Andrews said it has been a great experience to relocate families from homes that are five decades old into new and more spacious quarters.

"We look forward to providing the same to the field grade and company grade families from Rossell and Fairfax Villages," she said.

Nolan said nine to 12 months of site work occurs after the demolition of an old home to get the location ready for new home construction.

"This involves mass grading, installation of new water and storm water systems and road installation," he said. "The site is prepped to fine grade and concrete pads are poured for the new homes. After a number of the concrete pads are completed, vertical construction commences. Framing crews, roofing and the exterior skin work commences."

Once the roof is on and the house is closed in, Nolan said the unit is typically completed within 16 weeks.

"From the time the first old home comes down to a new home being completed, it typically takes 18-24 months depending on site conditions and weather," he said.

Crews salvage cabinets, appliances and mechanical parts of equipment that may be used in other existing homes after residents vacate homes that are slated for demolition, said Eddie Hudspeth, Pinnacle Maintenance Director.

"Some of the old appliances are put aside for use in the older units," he explained. "They can also be used as loaners in new construction."

At Rossell Village, FBRC also allowed the installation's Directorate of Public Works and other partner organizations and residents to transplant existing shrubs for their use.



ABOVE: Framing is under way on new homes in Cedar Grove Village.



RIGHT: A worker puts up exterior walls on a Cedar Grove Village home. Once exterior walls and roof are in place, a home takes about 16 weeks to complete.



ABOVE: CWO2 Kenley Kirkland of the 12th Aviation Battalion checks his e-mail as he directs movers bringing items into his Lewis Village home.

LEFT (CUTOUT): A mover carries boxes into the Kirkland's new home. The Kirklands' move from Fairfax to Lewis Village was entirely paid for by FBRC.



Photos by Marry Mallin

FBRC's spacious welcome center provides information and services to new and current residents.

'Main Street' living

Town center is Army's first mixed-used development

By Melina Rodriguez

Fort Belvoir's new Town Center will bring the military community here something no other Army installation has ever had.

"The new town center is the first mixed-use development incorporating AAFES retail into the Residential Communities Initiative," said Casey Nolan, project director, Fort Belvoir Residential Communities. "The concept was to integrate the new housing with retail tenants and the Clark Pinnacle Welcome Center. Mixed-use town centers are a common practice in the private market and accepted by local communities."

There are three phases in the town center project, with the first and second already complete, according to Nolan, who works in the development and construction of the new housing.

"The first phase of the town center was completed in October 2005," Nolan said. "The 25 residential units on the second and third floors along 12th Street were completed and 24 units were leased within two weeks to both enlisted and officer families. One unit has been retained as the model home for potential residents."

Many of the families living in the units are already settled in and enjoying the benefits.

"It's convenient to the clothing store and the post exchange," said Sgt. Amie Butcher, who is an

administrative assistant in the Pentagon's Human Resources Center.

Butcher lives in a three bedroom residential unit. Her two daughters are currently away at college and return home periodically on breaks.

The second phase of the town center was completed in January 2006 when the Clark Pinnacle Welcome Center opened for business.

"We relocated all the property management leasing specialists, community director and a Residential Community liaison office referral office to the building with the clock tower on 12th Street," said Nolan. "Now the future and existing residents have a central location on post within one of the new villages to go and address their housing needs."

Staff Sgt. Jason Carter, who works at U. S. Army Intelligence and Security Command, his wife Ivy and their daughter Jaelyn, 3, have lived in a new residential unit since November 2005.

"I love it because it's quiet and safe," said Ivy, who is an Army veteran who works at Dewitt Army Community Hospital as a medical clerk in physical therapy.

Ivy is also looking forward to the day spa that will be included in the third phase of the town center.

The third phase of the town center is the AAFES component which will consist of 11 stores including a Starbucks, GNC and a Rent-A-Center, said



Fort Belvoir's new town center is the Army's first mixed-use residential and retail development.

Trini Saucedo, general manger at the Fort Belvoir Exchange.

"Much of the community is experiencing this very same concept right outside of our own installation and they really love the convenience of residential living above retail stores," Saucedo said. "It's all about time and convenience and this will definitely serve the needs of both."

"I think it's a wonderful idea," said Kelly Clements, who will be a foreman, shift supervisor at the new Starbucks. "Starbucks is going to come in and teach us so that we are certified baristas."

Clark Pinnacle's development team and architect, Torti Gallas, came together to create the "main street" atmosphere. They envisioned having a mixed use element to bring the community together, said Nolan.

"The complete town center represents an integrated mix of residential, retail and office uses that will enable residents to walk from their homes, address housing issues and enjoy a cup of coffee in one trip," Nolan. "Creating a new 'main street' with exciting retail uses will strengthen the core of the South Post that now has 415 new homes."

At this point the Rent-A-Center is operational and costumers can call (703) 781-3985 for service and the Starbucks is expected to open around July 24, said Saucedo.

The grand opening for the Town Center is scheduled for late August.



The Starbucks interior has a warm and welcoming feel with muted tones and large comfortable furniture.

LESSON

Continued from Page C10

post's help.

Following the fire, FBRC relocated the family to a hospitality suite. The American Red Cross, the Army Relief Fund, George Washington Village, Tannon's unit, Echo Company, 302d Sig Bn.; and former installation Command Sergeant Major Andre' Douglas teamed up to lend support to the family.

"Clark Pinnacle really, really helped us out a lot," Tannon said.

Zyzyk recommends residents take out more insurance for special needs, if they anticipate \$5,000 will not be

enough coverage for their personal items. An example of a special need would be a TV that exceeds the value of \$5,000, she said.

Zyzyk also recommends liability insurance, which can be obtained through Assurant Group or the resident's car insurance company.

Tannon said many people think "nothing's ever gonna' happen to me."

He too had the same thoughts prior to the fire.

Following the fire, the Tannons sought additional renter's insurance with their auto insurance company, All-State.

Needless to say, the entire experience was "definitely a lesson learned," he said.

Unaccompanied Soldiers eligible for homes

By Chad Jones

Soldiers with family members here at Fort Belvoir are not the only people who can take advantage of privatized housing.

Select single service members and geographical bachelors are also eligible for homes, Villages at Belvoir Marketing Director Kim Lear said.

Single service members with the rank of E-6 and above, along with geographical bachelor, regardless of rank, are eligible for one of Woodlawn Village's two-bedroom, 1 bath, 1,500-square foot homes, Lear said.

Service members have the choice of living alone at their full Basic Housing Allowance rate or with a roommate for half

of their BAH, Lear said.

Soldiers who chose to have a roommate, but are not assigned one, still only pay the one-half BAH rate.

For more information, or to apply for a home, eligible Soldiers can speak with a family housing consultant at the Welcome Center, visit the Villages at Belvoir Web site at villagesatbelvoir.com or call (703) 454-9700.

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Clark Pinnacle embraces Belvoir community

By Jennifer Small

Their motto is "Building Communities" and Clark Pinnacle has taken that motto quite literally by not only building communities for the residents of Fort Belvoir, but by integrating themselves into the community.

"Ever since the beginning when we started working on this, they have said 'We will not be building houses, we will be building communities,'" said Bill Parsons, director of Fort Belvoir Morale, Welfare and Recreation. "Their whole attitude of giving back to the community really reinforces that."

Every year since 2004, Clark Pinnacle has given back to the Fort Belvoir community in a big way — through their annual charity golf tournament, held at the North Post Golf Course. The tournament raises money for selected Fort Belvoir organizations.

In the first year of the tournament, \$42,000 was raised and split equally between the Fort Belvoir Boy and Girl Scouts.

Last year the second edition of the Clark Pinnacle Charity Golf Classic raised nearly \$114,000 that was being split between Fort Belvoir Youth Sports and the Belvoir chapter of Army Emergency Relief (Funds).

"That money helped tremendously," said Jerry Arrington, director of Fort Belvoir Youth Sports. "We've been able to do new things for the programs that we didn't have in our budget."

Arrington said the donation nearly doubled the Youth Sports yearly budget, and allowed him to buy extra equipment for all of the programs, from Smart Start to youth football.

"That charitable donation has given me the leverage to spend money that we didn't have, on all of our programs," he said.

This year Clark Pinnacle has chosen three new recipients for the donations raised from the golf tournament — the Fort Belvoir chapter of the United Services Organizations, the Fort Belvoir Family Life Center and the Children of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund, a local charity in the D.C. area that provides college grants and financial assistance to the surviving children and spouses of U.S. military service members killed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"This year we selected three new beneficiaries, with the intent to touch as many people and organizations as possible," said Casey Nolan, project director for Clark Pinnacle.

This year's annual Clark Pinnacle Charity Golf Classic will take place on Aug. 10.

"We have high hopes this year; no matter what we raise, it will be great for the community," Nolan said.

Nolan said that the main sources of fundraising for the tournament come from members of the Fort Belvoir Residential Communities team, from the architects to the contractors and suppliers.

In an effort to further assimilate into the Fort Belvoir community, the Clark Pinnacle team has participated in intramural sports on post.

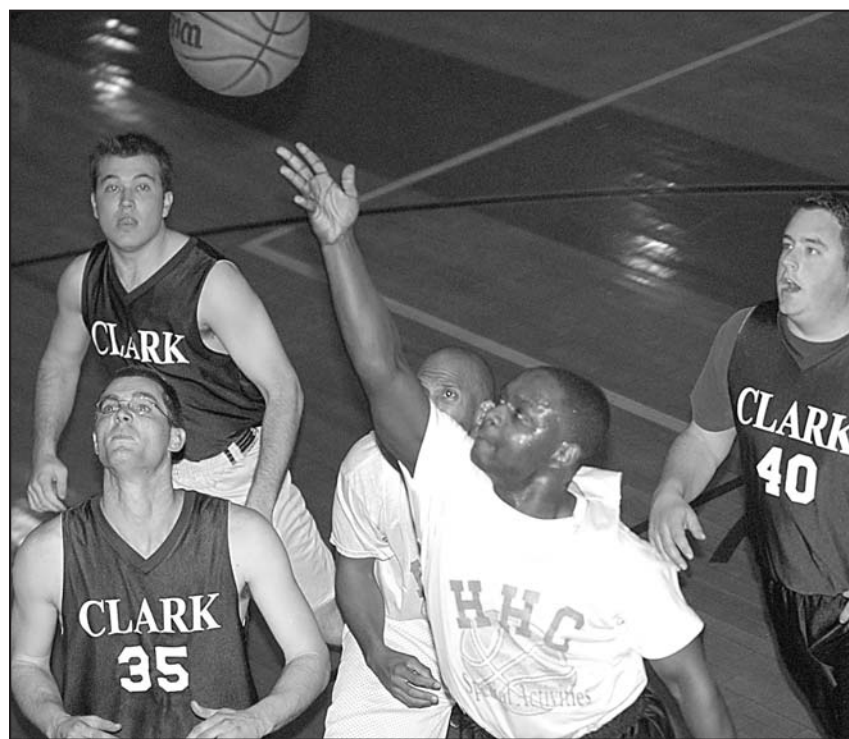
"Clark Pinnacle put together a team for the intramural basketball league, and though we might not have been the best team on the court, we certainly tried hard and had a great time participating in one of the great programs on Fort Belvoir," Nolan said.

On Fort Belvoir Clark Pinnacle has accomplished their vision of not only building, but becoming part of, the new Fort Belvoir community, through participation as well as donations.

"Clearly, their contributions demonstrate their commitment to the community and their desire to become a part of the community, not just in name, but by truly stepping forward, beyond building houses, to live up to the philosophy they've had all along of 'building communities,'" Parsons said.



Steph Claude chips up to the 11th hole to help Complete Landscaping Services make their par during last year's Clark Pinnacle Charity Golf Classic. The event raised \$114,000 for Fort Belvoir Youth Sports and Army Emergency Relief.



File photos

Clark Pinnacle employees take to the court against HHC Special Activities during last year's intramural basketball program.

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Clark Pinnacle strives to preserve trees while building new homes

By Jennifer Brennan

Clark Pinnacle and Fort Belvoir have a policy when it comes to taking care of Mother Earth and building new homes for service members: For every tree that's removed, another is planted.

"I'm proud to say of the villages designed and under construction to date, we actually plan to be 2,000 trees ahead," said Casey Nolan, Clark Pinnacle project director.

This means that Clark Pinnacle is projected to add 2,000 more trees than originally existed throughout all the villages by the end of the Initial Development Period in 2011.

Trees provide shade, conserve energy and improve air quality, said Pete Waas, Fort Belvoir Directorate of Public Works natural resource specialist and program manager for land management and pest management.

In a decade, the trees that are planted now will be more mature and larger, Nolan said.

Yet, for the first 10 years of the trees' lives, they will provide more aesthetic benefits than shade. A tree must be at least 15 years old before it can produce the shading benefits, Waas said.

To make the best decisions when it comes to tree preservation, Clark Pinnacle has a tree consultant who advises the company of what trees to save based on age, health and location within the village. Clark

Pinnacle's tree saving practices include transplanting trees from older villages to newer villages, increasing the number of trees that can be saved and implementing a new preservation plan that involves assessing the health of each tree, Nolan said.

It costs about \$25,000 to preserve one tree. The cost includes manpower hours, additional site work needed to build around the tree, ongoing maintenance and redirection of utility lines around the tree. More than \$500,000 was spent on tree preservation in Vernondale Village, Nolan said.

But every tree's value must be considered, according to Waas.

"You have to look at the long term benefits and values the tree provides," Waas said. "You don't want to spend a lot of money on a tree that's borderline as far as health and condition go."

The trees that aren't saved in place are torn down and turned into mulch, moved to other neighborhoods or to the tree farm. The tree farm is where uprooted trees are planted and preserved until replanted. But according to Nolan, "it makes a lot more sense to just put it in its final location."

Waas approves of the tree farm, noting that transplanting trees doesn't hurt them.

In taking a look across the post, dominant species include beech, red and white oak, hickory and gum, Waas said.

Some trees stood prior to the establishment of Camp

Humphreys in 1918. The older, more mature trees can be found in the post's historic neighborhoods, according to Waas.

"When you're looking at a tree that's almost 75 or 100 years old, it's almost irreplaceable when it comes to long term benefits," Waas said.

In fact, a mature oak tree can release 260 pounds of oxygen per year. In comparison, an average person consumes 386 pounds of oxygen per year, Waas said.

"It might take 30 or 40 young trees to provide the same amount of oxygen per year," Waas said.

Since Clark Pinnacle began building and renovating homes for service members, the company's saved many trees, according to Nolan.

"Both Vernondale and Cedar Grove represent the largest efforts to save trees in place," Nolan said.

Vernondale started out with 300 trees and quadrupled its number to 1,200. Cedar Grove had 175 trees and should have 600, Nolan said.

Lewis Heights was torn down and rebuilt as Lewis Village, going from 600 trees to 1,000, according to Nolan.

Rossell Village started out with 550 and about 60 trees are projected to be saved in place.

"In the long term, we're actually improving the environment here as a part of building the new housing," Nolan said. "A lot of people don't realize the efforts we've been undertaking."



Photo by Marny Malin

New trees line Lewis Village's streets on Fort Belvoir.

TOOLS

Continued from Page C9

quarterly newsletter, which gives up-to-date information to residents on community events and issues.

The installation commander's residential town hall meetings also serve as a way to communicate with residents. Held three times annually, these meetings are open to all residents. According to Fort Belvoir's Director of Public Affairs Don Carr, town hall meetings provide residents the opportunity to hear directly from the installation command about programs and issues affecting their everyday lives. The installation com-

mand team, base operations directors, support service managers and representatives from FBRC are on hand to provide information, and each meeting ends with a question and answer period that allows residents to voice their concerns.

"Town hall meetings not only allow us to put information out, but they allow us to gather valuable information as well," Carr said. "They allow the decision makers on the base operations staff to hear what we're doing well and what we could do better. They also allow us to address misperceptions and stop the rumor mill."

Carr said one of the installation's most important communication tools is delivered directly to every home on post each Thursday.

"The *Belvoir Eagle* is the flagship of our communications effort," Carr said. "It exists to provide news and information to the total Fort Belvoir audience, including our housing residents, and to provide two-way communication between the command and the community."

On a lower level, community managers also communicate with residents by using fliers.

"We use the fliers for reminders of resident responsibilities and pool regulations," said Tric Zyzyk, who manages Herryford, River and Vernondale villages. "Everybody needs to be reminded periodically."

Residents are also notified when contracted employees will be in their homes. For example, contractors recently came to homes in Vernondale

Who to contact

Community managers

Tric Zyzyk: River, Herryford & Vernondale villages, (703) 781-7280

Rebecca Reiter: Belvoir, Rossell, Jadwin, Fairfax, Gerber & Lewis villages, (703) 781-4833

Joi Gatling: Dogue Creek, Colyer & Park villages, (703) 781-0596

Tonja Faggins: Woodlawn Village, (703) 781-0566

Other housing contacts

Mary Bronwyn: FBRC, (703) 454-

9723

Vicki Davis: RCLO, (703) 805-3568

Other contacts/sources

Commander's Hotline: (703) 805-2442, gc_hotline@belvoir.army.mil
Belvoir Information Line: (703) 805-3030

On the Web

FBRC:

www.belvoirfamilyhousing.com

Fort Belvoir: www.belvoir.army.mil

Village to upgrade the computerized lock system, said Zyzyk, and the residents were informed by hand delivered notifications.

In addition to all of these resources, the mayors of each village organize community events and write a monthly

newsletter.

"We are the information highway for our villages," said Monica Kelley, Vernondale community village mayor.

The newsletters contain a variety of information on subjects such as self-help and events.

Mock statements to prepare residents for utility bills

By Melina Rodriguez

Herryford and Vernondale Village residents will begin receiving new bills in August; fortunately they won't have to pay them.

"Residents of these villages will begin receiving monthly, no charge utility consumption reports that show utility usage for electricity and gas and include conservation tips," said Charlotte Kraenzle, communications director at Clark Pinnacle.

The six-month long mock billing period is part of a Department of Defense-wide program to conserve energy and track its usage.

Beginning in August, residents in Vernondale and Herryford villages will receive mock utility bills that will determine an average monthly consumption rate for electricity and gas.

"[DoD] felt the only way to bring about conservation was to make the user responsible,"

said Rhonda Hayes, deputy director of the Army's Residential Communities Initiative program in a press release.

"Consumption reports will reflect each home's actual consumption against a baseline," said Kraenzle. "The consumption baseline is the current month average of all the homes of same or similar size included in this program."

Actual billing for homes in Vernondale and Herryford will begin in February 2007 for January usage, said Kraenzle.

"Once actual billing begins ... residents who use less than the established benchmark will receive a rebate or a credit for their conservation," said Kraenzle. "Residents who consume more than average will be responsible for any overage. The Army's plan is that residents who use energy wisely will experience no out of pocket expenses."

In a letter to residents, Installation Commander Col. Brian Lauritzen stressed that

the purpose of the mock-billing period is to enable the Army, the private partner and residents to work out all the concerns of the implementation of the program.

"The Army and our private partners will be holding a town hall meeting before actual billing begins to further discuss details of this program," Lauritzen said in the letter.

In 1996 Congress passed the Military Housing Privatization Initiative Act. This act authorized the armed services to privatize housing and to use the BAH as a revenue stream for funding housing projects.

In 1998, the Office of the Secretary of Defense issued a policy to require service members living in privatized housing to be responsible for their utilities.

The program only applies to new homes.

"All new and fully renovated privatized housing has Energy Star features and



Photo by Marny Malin

A contractor installs wiring for a new home in Lewis Village.

appliances, as well as additional insulation and energy saving windows," said Kraenzle. "Residents in non-renovated historic homes or homes scheduled for demolition will

not be responsible for utilities. Residents living in renovated or new homes outside of Vernondale and Herryford will be responsible for utilities at a later date."

CDMP

Continued from Page C3

demolish 1,630 homes during the Initial Development Period (2003-2011) and rehabilitate 170 historic homes.

"We refer to the plan as a living document," said Thompson, who was the project coordinator on the Residential Communities Initiative, LLC management team for the development and construction portion of the plan.

"The CDMP is basically a guideline for the project," Thompson said.

Other sections of the plan include residential services, property management, and transition and logistics.

John Strang, RCLO engineer and technician, worked at the Directorate of Public Works' Housing Office during the plans development.

DPW supplied drawings on existing units, utility information and reviewed and commented on the plan, he said.

The RCI team held charettes seeking comments from the residents about the proposed plans.

"A lot of what is going on in these villages is a direct result of comments from DPW," Strang said.

Susie Gillett, Fort Belvoir environmental law attorney, also played a role in the planning.

The plan includes types of housing to be provided, the number of units to be transferred, architectural features of planned new housing, residents' responsibilities and provisions for resident feedbacks, a financial plan, legal and governance documents, technology in the housing, and resident services, according to Gillett.

The Office of the Staff Judge Advocate's role in the CDMP was to review the plan for legal sufficiency in the environmental provision, the technology plan related to the cable franchise, the property management plan, the resident responsibility guide and resident services plans, com-



Photo by Marny Malin

A worker waters the front lawn of a Vernondale Village home.

munity facilities such as neighborhood centers and tot lots, resident feedback provision and the legal and governance plan, Gillett said.

Under the Military Housing

Privatization Initiative, the Army was required to submit the plan to Congress for review. The plan was approved by Congress in October 2003.

Thompson has seen the plan

come to its fruition as she drives by the new neighborhoods. "I'm really proud of what we came up with," Thompson said. "I'm really pleased with the houses."

The CDMP demonstrates the working relationship that exists between Fort Belvoir and Clark Pinnacle.

Casey Nolan, Clark Pinnacle project director, described the partnership between Clark Pinnacle and RCLO.

"We're working together on the day-to-day issues that come up," Nolan said.

Clark Pinnacle works closely with the garrison with its relocation and rescheduling plan, Nolan said.

RCLO serves two roles — liaison between resident and Clark Pinnacle and liaison between the garrison and Clark Pinnacle, Thompson said.

Strang would concur.

"We ensure that the Army's vision is brought forth," Strang said.

The CDMP was designed to accomplish the same mission.

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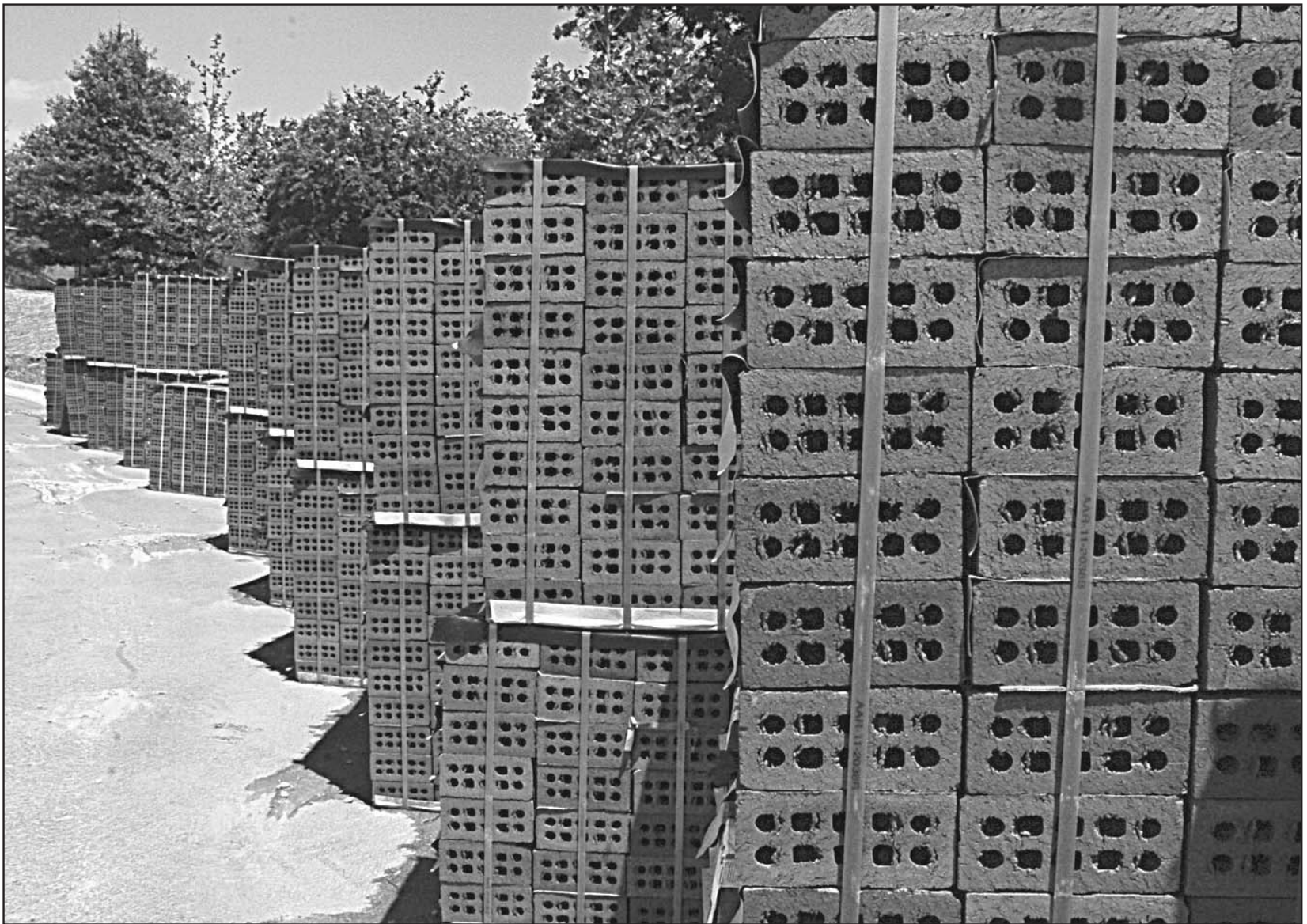


Photo by Marny Malin

A ton of bricks

Clark Pinnacle has laid more than 25 miles of sidewalk around Fort Belvoir's new housing villages. They've used more than 73,000 bricks weighing 400,000 pounds, which is the equivalent of 100,000 adult elephants. They've also used more than 4,200 miles of lumber to build Fort Belvoir's 584 new homes. That is approximately the distance from here to Disneyland in California and back.

INITIATIVE

Continued from Page C9

you've never known before," said Diane Payne, a resident of Lewis Village. "The playground with the soccer field is great, because it's big and the kids all play there, and for the parents, you get to meet and talk while the kids are playing."

The layout of the homes, as well as the existence of common areas, have allowed residents to get to know each other.

"This housing is great, it's so nice," Payne said. "The sense of community

that we have, with the houses being connected and sharing driveways, it really helps you get to know your neighbors."

Bolden said the Army is happy with the results, and has gotten positive feedback from the residents.

"Across the portfolio, families are happy," Bolden said. "All I know is that I can stand in front of a mirror and ask myself 'Has your program improved the quality of life for our Soldiers and their families?' and I know that answer is a resounding yes."

"All we wanted to do was give Soldiers the same high quality of life as the people they have pledged to defend," Bolden said.



Photo by Marny Malin

Lewis Village's new playground allows mothers to sit as their children play.

ROAD

Continued from Page C5

greens.

"It's the first of its kind in the Army," said Bolden. "We've built the types of homes and communities that are in high demand in the surrounding communities off the installation."

This design led to another Army first:

an international charter award for excellence in urban design and development awarded by the Congress for the New Urbanism, a Chicago-based non-profit organization who teaches the principles of New Urbanism.

Additionally, in 2005, Fort Belvoir's housing won a Gold Award in the National Association of Home Builders' Best in American Living Awards Program. This competition recognizes home design and construction that exempli-

fies design, quality, success in the marketplace and the best of American living.

"The best part is the significant increase in the pride the Soldiers have with their home and community," said Bolden. "Soldiers are absolutely delighted and simply can't believe they are moving into a brand new home."

Fort Belvoir privatization and Soldiers

The Army's Family Housing program is considered to be a major incentive for recruiting and retaining dedicated individuals in the Army; therefore, maintaining and sustaining attractive, safe and convenient housing for Soldiers and their families is a priority.

According to Vicki Davis, Fort Belvoir housing management specialist, Belvoir RCI is a success and has been well received by the Soldiers and family members eligible to live here.

"The majority are ecstatic about their new homes," explained Davis, "especially those that have lived in older housing on Fort Belvoir."

Davis said that many service members are now coming from installations with an RCI program, but she still gets a lot of "good job Army" from those new arrivals that aren't as familiar.

Sergeant 1st Class Chris Woolley of Fort Belvoir's 249th Engineer Battalion

said the new housing was a deciding factor on whether or not to stay in the Army longer.

"The improved living conditions were 33.3 percent of our decision to stay past 20 years," said Woolley. "We are very pleased with the housing."

Woolley also said the new housing has changed the way he and his family stay connected with family and friends.

"With the larger house and decent yard, we are able to have visitors stay for several days without feeling cramped," said Woolley.

One of the challenges, however, has been maintaining the existing homes that are either awaiting demolition or identified as historically sensitive.

"Maintaining existing homes has always been a challenge, even before privatization," said Davis. "As a result, one of the most significant challenges of the RCI program has been marketing the existing homes prior to renovation or replacement, given that the Soldiers choose to live in the housing. While it is much quicker than traditional MILCON, it can still take up to 10 years to renovate or replace all of the homes."

Privatized housing and RCI is an overall success both here at Fort Belvoir and Army-wide, said Davis. She said there is an excellent working relationship with the Belvoir RCI partners and subsequently, life is a lot easier in the world of housing here.



Workers paint the doors of new homes in Lewis Village.

Photo by Marny Malin

There's a New Town Center in Your Area!

"The Village Commons at Belvoir"



Grand Opening

Wednesday, August 23rd, 2006

10:00am



Workers help make houses homes



Photos by Marny Malin

Ruth Belk, maintenance technician, finishes up a repair to a house by writing up a report to the residents on what was done and any instructions to the residents if necessary.

Ruth Belk, maintenance technician

You can never judge a book by its cover, especially Ruth Belk.

Belk, a thin woman with long black hair, is a maintenance technician here at Fort Belvoir. She is the only female on her crew of approximately seven that maintains Herryford, Vernondale and River villages.

"The work itself is interesting," said Belk. "It's surprising what you can pull out of a drain."

Recently, Belk pulled a plastic Sponge Bob figurine out of a toilet. She called the tenant and asked, "Where's Patrick?" Patrick is Sponge Bob's best friend on the children's cartoon entitled *SpongeBob SquarePants*.

"The challenges make you test your skills," Belk said. "It makes you adapt."

On any given day Belk repairs air

conditioning units, faulty appliances and leaks and that's just naming a few of her abilities.

"I'm a jack of all trades and a king of none," said Belk, laughing.

At the beginning of each day Belk is given the emergency calls that can include extreme leaks, broken door locks and electrical hazards. After she completes these tasks she moves onto routine calls like a screen that is falling off of a window or a dripping faucet.

"She cares ... she wants to leave a good mark on the customers," said Eddie Hudspeth, maintenance director at Fort Belvoir. "It's a great experience."

Maintenance technicians leave customer satisfaction response cards at every home they work on, and last quarter Belk received the most positive cards from the customers and was awarded the Maintenance Technician of the Quarter Award.

"You try to make [the customers] happy," said Belk.

Rebecca Reiter, community manager

Everyday Rebecca Reiter makes a to do list, but she rarely finishes it. Reiter is a community manager at Fort Belvoir and every day is a different experience.

"There is always a new challenge," said Reiter. "No day is the same."

Reiter oversees the homes in Fairfax, Gerber, Lewis, Belvoir and Jadwin Loop villages.

"I make sure the Soldiers are taken care of by making sure work orders and service requests get done," Reiter said.

After making her to do list Reiter begins to call residents to follow up on work orders or to address complaints.

Reiter began working at Fort Belvoir in December 2003 with the implementation of privatized housing. She is one of four community managers that oversee housing on Fort Belvoir.

These managers make sure that residents have a smooth transition to and from Fort Belvoir and they oversee maintenance crews to make sure that problems are addressed in a timely manner.

"I love my job," said Reiter. "It gives me the opportunity to work with and meet great individuals, families and Soldiers, who sacrifice so much for us. It's an honor."

Reiter helps residents to transition into their homes by answering ques-



Rebecca Reiter oversees the homes in Fairfax, Gerber, Lewis, Belvoir, and Jadwin Loop villages.

tions and explaining policies.

"[Reiter] is very helpful," said Channel Sanders, assistant manager to Reiter. "When there is somebody that needs help there is no limit to what she will do. She is the go-to person."

Reiter deals with residents every day and will go to many lengths to make them happy, said Sanders.

"I think good customer service is the backbone to and most important aspect of this project," Reiter said. "We strive every day to provide everybody with exceptional service."

Prince Robinson, maintenance supervisor

Every morning Prince Robinson drives a gray Ford pickup truck looking for trash and any other types of problems that he may notice.

Robinson is a maintenance manager at Fort Belvoir and this is a part of his daily ritual to make sure his assigned neighborhoods are up and running in the proper condition.

"It's a new challenge everyday," said Robinson. "I drive around the houses and check for trash, trees or big objects and I pick it up."

Robinson checks the properties at Fairfax, Gerber, Lewis, Belvoir and Jadwin Loop villages.

One time Robinson saw a snake and had to call KIRA to come and pick it up.

On a regular day Robinson oversees approximately seven maintenance technicians and groundskeepers. He



Prince Robinson checks information for the electronic lock system as he inspects a house before turning it over to incoming tenants.

schedules work to be done and makes sure that work orders are taken care of in a timely manner; Robinson even goes out on calls when he is needed.

"When I walk away I

like to see people smile," said Robinson, who attended Lincoln Technical Institute and took classes in air conditioning and heating repair and plumbing.



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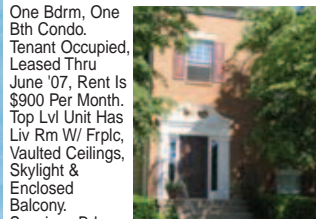
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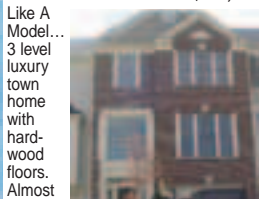
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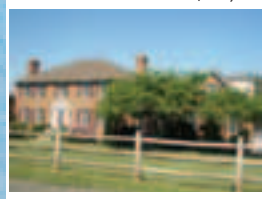
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